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C O N F I D E N T I A L BRATISLAVA 000749

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/20/2015

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [PINR](#) [LO](#)

SUBJECT: STILL NO PARLIAMENTARY QUORUM AFTER A WEEK;
COALITION HOPES TO SUCCEED 9/21

REF: A. BRATISLAVA 738

[1](#)B. BRATISLAVA 730

Classified By: DCM Lawrence R. Silverman for Reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY AND COMMENT: A week after failing to gather the quorum necessary to open parliament (ref B), the Coalition failed again on September 20 to bring 76 MPs to the chamber, reach quorum, and resume the council's session after summer recess. Independent deputies continue to move in mysterious ways, with several of the MPs the coalition was counting on noticeably absent (or in one case, even departing moments before the head count) from the chamber, while several former opposition members left their party for good to join the coalition movement. Despite the wheeling and dealing of the past week, the coalition could get only 75 deputies to the table September 20. Prime Minister Dzurinda's advisor confidently told us the coalition would garner the necessary deputies September 21, and that seems to be the analytical consensus here. If they do not, several other options remain at the coalition's disposal, but early elections would be almost certainly assured. END SUMMARY AND COMMENT.

WITH FRIENDS LIKE THESE...

[1](#)2. (C) At 9:00am September 20, Chairman of parliament Pavol Hrusovsky attempted to open the parliamentary session which had been postponed after falling three votes short of quorum last week. While three independent MPs sent signals that they would be joining the coalition to assist in this effort, the three -- Ivan Kino, Gustav Krajci, and Robert Nemcsics -- were not present for the quorum count. SDKU MP Pal Farkas told us that Nemcsics was present in the chamber before the 9:00am, quorum call, but that he left shortly before. Farkas told us before the 10:00am call that he was sure that Nemcsics had simply been called away by some sort of important business; however, the 10:00am count came and went without Nemcsics, Krajci, or Kino.

[1](#)3. (C) SDKU MP Roman Vavrik told us after the count that he believes that Krajci was there and that he simply pressed the "wrong button" on the automated voting system, a story that KDH MP Jozef Miklusicak told us as well. Vavrik also told us that he believes that Ivan Simko -- who told the press yesterday that he would not be participating in this morning's attempted opening -- is closer to "pushing the right button" at tomorrow's next scheduled roll call, but did not elaborate on whether or not he believes Simko will reach a deal with the coalition. Miklusicak told us that KDH MPs are pleased because they believe Krajci was present for the quorum, so they are confident that the session will begin tomorrow. According to Miklusicak, KDH really was only considering early elections as a "last resort."

NOT A PERFECT DAY FOR THE OPPOSITION, EITHER

[1](#)4. (C) Despite the fact that the coalition failed to begin the session, there was bad news today for the opposition, as well: two HZDS MPs -- including Karol Dzupa, a longtime party loyalist -- defected from Vladimir Meciar's party and signed on to Lubomir Lintner's club of former ANO deputies. By joining the club, MPs Dzupa and Eduard Kolesar (a former IV participant) pledged their support for the coalition and they showed up for the quorum call. In a press conference following the failed quorum call, Meciar again called for early elections on June 10, 2006. Meciar said he was surprised by the departure of Dzupa and Kolesar, and declared tongue-in-cheek that he planned to remain a member of HZDS. While there are rumors that Meciar "sent" Dzupa and Kolesar to help the coalition, none of our contacts in parliament put any credence in them. Dzupa -- never a major player in the party -- may simply be another HZDS member disgruntled with Meciar's autocratic leadership of the party.

WHY KOLESAR LEFT HZDS

[1](#)5. (C) COMMENT: During our interactions with Kolesar as an IV, we found him to be a HZDS "believer" who was likely indoctrinated by his parents (Kolesar is in his mid-30's). He was a local organizer and youth leader for HZDS, though he

always advocated closer cooperation with the coalition at the same time. We doubt he left HZDS "on principle," and find it more likely that, at number 24, he felt he wasn't high enough on the party's candidate list. By joining another party, he may be trying to prolong his political career (and retain the handsome salary that comes with it). Lintner and the coalition have probably been pursuing him as a "convert" for a while, as he wouldn't have as much political "baggage" as other, older, HZDS MPs.

TOMORROW: PARTY CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF PARLIAMENT

16. (C) COMMENT, CONT'D: Our SDKU and KDH interlocutors are confident that the parliament will have quorum and that the session will begin the morning of September 21; however, they were also fairly confident last week. One of the options being widely discussed in the press is the possible temporary recall of Foreign Minister Eduard Kukan to parliament, where he would "bump" former SDKU MP Jozef Hurban (who has not been participating in the quorum counts) and help open the session. However, we feel that such a tactic would only emphasize what the opposition is already claiming: that Dzurinda's coalition does not have enough support in parliament to advance its agenda, and must resort to manipulating the membership rather than garnering support among independent and opposition peers. If they fail to reach quorum on September 21, early elections become even more likely; even if the coalition succeeds, however, this experience has probably made early elections -- perhaps in June 2006 -- much more likely.

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